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## **Personalized Learning Plans for Vermont Students: Grantees Share Their Successes and Next Steps Student Engagement is Key to Successful Implementation**

**FAIRLEE** – Over 40 educators from across the state convened in Fairlee at the conclusion of the school year to share their work in implementing [Personalized Learning Plans](#) (PLPs). The educators, representing 16 schools chosen for a PLP Implementation Grant award, were convening to share the different methods, tools and results they have discovered regarding personalization of learning since receiving funding in February.

In February 2014, 18 Vermont schools were awarded PLP Implementation Grants, according to Debi Price, AOE Education Project Manager.

“These school teams have done a substantial amount of work in a very short period of time to assist their school communities in understanding this fundamental shift in education,” said Price. “The processes, tools and materials that these teams have created will provide significant support to other Vermont schools as they begin their own implementation process.”

The enactment of PLP requirements through [Act 77](#) of 2013 and the 2014 [Education Quality Standards](#) aims to help students achieve academic success, be prepared for post-secondary opportunities, and engage actively in civic life. Schools need to ensure that they have designed a PLP process for implementation beginning in the fall of 2015. Schools will be expected to initiate a process for students to identify their goals, learning styles, and abilities and align this with the school's academic expectations and student's pathway toward graduation.

It was clear from the work shared by educators at this gathering, facilitated by David Ruff of the [Great Schools Partnership](#) of Portland, Maine, that the key to success in implementing these Personalized Learning Plans was ensuring true student engagement in the process. From utilizing student-run electronic portfolios, to hosting guest speakers engaging the student in alternate pathways to graduation, to utilizing technology to ensure portability and ease of use, each school shared different strategies for engaging students and making the first year of PLP implementation a success.

Jerry Cassels, Director of Guidance at Northfield Middle High School, explains one method of success:

Our approach at Northfield Middle High School to the development of PLPs is called “Student Driven PLPS.”

We have trained a group of student champions at each grade level to promote the concept of PLPs and train other students. A seventh grader named Autumn Chamberlin has summed it up in one sentence: “Student driven PLPs are helping other students reach their goals while reaching your own goals.”

The Vermont Agency of Education is anticipating another round of PLP Implementation Grants for the 2014-2015 Academic Year. Information regarding this funding round will be available after July 15, 2014.

For more information on Personalized Learning Plans, and the work of this group of grant recipients, go to <http://education.vermont.gov/plp-working-group/main>.

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